

The Lands of Quínoth

*their History, Politics,
and People*

*and Various Interactions
among Them*

In Times Passed.

*As Discovered, Researched,
And Read by*

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*Scholar of Gadun,
City of Tomes*

~~*(With some small*~~

~~*assistance from others)*~~

With a huge amount of assistance from someone without his head stuck in a book all day long!
-Garius

CHAPTER 1

The first and earliest written record to be found on Quinoth comes from the hand of one Lord Sindrith. Since it is an itemized list of goods lost in a dragon attack upon his home village, we may safely assume that he was of the Dwome species and, as ever, it is the merchant class that most effectively spreads knowledge and skill throughout Quinoth to its many denizens whether it would benefit them or not...

Which is where he then takes another 30 pages to explain to no one in particular that language and writing have spread thanks to merchants needing to converse with their customers both abroad and at home. Sometimes it is a good thing and sometimes it is a bad thing. Money and mathematics spread this way, too. This explains why most folks can at least converse in a common tongue if not actually read and write. Honestly, 30 pages...

... Dwomes are, of course, among the oldest species extant upon the face of Quinoth along with the Rakheune, the newly named Lyverint, and indeed the august personages of the Cyclopedians ourselves. Naturally, one finds many similarities in species with such long histories, but then again, many differences as well...

And just like that, another fistful of pages gone. All this to tell you that the Dwomes, Rakheunes, Lyverint, and Cyclopedians have been in the world the longest. It is just like him to forget the Glimmer though. Glimmers have been here for at least as long as the Cyclopedians. If it wasn't for us, they'd never get anything done. Of course, how long that actually is is up for debate. There are those who think the Cyclopedians are a younger race. Not the youngest mind you, but younger than many of the others.

There were others before. What happened to them we don't yet know, but certain stones in certain ruins indicate that there used to be races and species of people that came before even the oldest Dwome and Lyverint (you have to remember they used to be elves before the curse) records. We're talking ancient.

Really, that's it for this chapter. Over 100 pages to tell you those two things. Long winded, that's what I call it.

CHAPTER 2

In ages past the spawn of evil known as...

Dragons. He's going to talk dragon here. Seriously, who doesn't know about the dragons and what happened to them? Let me give you the short and accurate version instead of the long and speculative one he launched into. Dragons were everywhere as were their kindred species like serpents and wyverns and other dragon-kin. You practically couldn't step foot outside your door without accidentally treading on some scaly fire-breather's

territory. Then the Rakheune did something. No one knows what exactly, but all of a sudden Dragons weren't even around anymore. Just the ones called Sheddars. That's it. That is all there is left of Dragons. Bears remembering, that.

CHAPTER 3

And then bad things happened to the Lyverint because of the Rakheune. Most folks call it the curse. It's a shame really to see how bad it has gotten. Not much hope for them. Oh how the mighty have fallen, etc.

CHAPTER 4

Nope!

CHAPTER 5

In the Northern Nightlands, where the Lyverint dwell, life is harsh and unpleasant. Where once glory and beauty held sway and were every day occurrences, now there exists only chaos and vile deeds and the constant need of the curse...

This is decent stuff here, I'm going to let him tell most of it...

The Nightlands are primarily a woodland realm with Glantvoe Forest to the East and the great woods of the Nony Vale and Darkwood Forest to the West. Once rich in both resources and culture, the rise of the Lyverint have seen both of these dwindle away, wasted in the excess of the curse. Now they rely heavily on goods imported from the South via the Dwome Expanse. Tafeld, the City of Courts, is the last remaining bastion of the old cultural reach of the Lyverint and it is here that what few calm heads remain among them meet to decide such matters of import as they can be bothered to recognize.

The Dwome Expanse is a vast land bisected by the Azarbuhm Mountains and their constituent peaks. Travel over this range is difficult and but one true pass exists between the two halves of the Expanse. It is perhaps this feature more than any other that lead the Dwome population to become traders and merchants. The necessity of relations with people outside their own lands to supply needed goods and services has lead to many advancements in Dwome society...

Yeah, yeah, we know... let's move on a bit.

...bounded to the North by the Nightlands, to the South by Dragonrend and the Council Lakes — although not truly a political entity of it's own — and still to the West by The Nesting Hills, the Dwoomes could either fight all comers, or profit from them. Their choice is plain to see.

The main means of expansion and growth within the regions of the Dwome Expanse has been via economic means. Shrewd land trades, collateral interest of Real Estate, and frequently the outright purchase of such land as was needed to meet their interests have provided the Dwome people with enough room for expansion and growth and in turn given them the largest Nation of any yet known in Quinoth.

Dwoomes live and die by the size of their purse. The bigger the better. It's not as if they are particularly sneaky about it either. Everyone knows. But they sure are good at getting the best of a deal.

Dragonrend, much like it's people, is a wasted land fallen into much ruin. The Shedders, as they are called, seem barely able to drag themselves out of the swirling ash their forebears left behind and it is only fitting that such a lovely species live in the lowliest of places. Thank to millennia of destruction unleashed on the land by their ancestors, many great tomes of knowledge and learning were...

He goes a bit off the rails here. And honestly, it all may be a little too harsh. It seems too easy to simply label all Shedders as the refuse of Quinoth and dismiss them out of hand. In truth, a more reasonable person might take the view that the Shedders have suffered enough and maybe it is time to try to raise them out of the muck instead of trod them down into it.

...the benefit of their medicinal venom, however, can not be denied and many lives have been extended because of it. If only it were not necessary to treat with such despicable creatures in order to acquire it.

The Rakheune Conclave is a little known and little studied nation. The Rakheune guard it jealously and refuse to allow outsiders to travel within it's borders without the express consent of all it's factions, something which is rarely agreed upon even at the best of times. It is known to hold within it's borders both vast lakes and vast deserts. For many people, the only point of contact is Lynson Tower, the terminal head of one of the many air whale transport lines. Even then, few people are allowed more than a cursory glance at the surrounding lands. What goes on within its borders and among its people has ever remained a cypher to the outside world. Given what the Rakheune appear to be capable of, this may be no bad thing.

He's not joking. They've certainly earned their reputation if you can believe everything you hear. Most people, given to listening to the old wife's tales and rumor, give any Rakheune they meet a wide berth and stay out of whatever business they may have. Myself, I tend to get along with most people and I've not met what you might call a 'bad' Rakheune yet. Strange? Odd? Distant? Yes, yes, and yes. But bad? Not really, no.

The lands of the Barbarian Holds are a collection of tenuously organized tribal lands held together by a self-organizing group of chieftains under the nominal leadership of the self-styled Sama "The Awesome". The Gorilataur populace, while not ruled directly by Sama, are a warrior people with many long held traditions governing their behavior. Many of the clans and tribes are in a near constant state of war with each other, their neighbors and anyone else who dares to enter their country. However, they are often the first line of defense against those who would threaten the halls of our beloved Gadun and so...

The Gorilataurs are big, scary and very good at fighting. They practice it practically all the time. You can thank them for the fact that Gadun stands at all. If you left it entirely up to the Cyclopedians to defend the City of Tones, the battle would be over before they even got their books closed. We like Sama's People. They seem to understand that some books are as good as weapons and, while not necessarily as good as an axe for instance, they can and do bring down empires and kings. They help keep our borders safe. And probably yours, too.

Mighty Greywall. What is there to say about this land that is not known the world over. The mighty City of Tones, Gadun, is it's crowning, glorious jewel and ensconced inside is a repository of...

Honestly, if you don't stop him, old Inkthumb will go on FOREVER about Gadun. It's a lovely place, really, but I think not quite as lovely as Inkthumb believes. Two peoples live here, the Cyclopedians with their one great eye constantly turned towards the latest text and studying it as they read for the tiniest piece of new knowledge about Quinoth and it's inhabitants, and the Glimmer, of which I myself am one. Now, on the whole the Glimmer are a much more intelligent, useful, kind, and above all, interesting species. We serve the Cyclopedians and always have from as far back as any of us can remember. We serve them because... well... no one really knows why, we just do. A Glimmer is never more happy than when he is helping a Cyclopedian with his research and this is just as it should be. Of course, the important work the Cyclopedians do can't be interrupted and so we've learned little ways of not disturbing them as they study. My father used to say, "If you can change out the book they're reading and they don't notice, you are just about good enough." Personally, I think you're only just beginning. Now, if you can write in it when they are only two pages over? Well, then we can talk.

... lovely halls full of the world's oldest and most important books.

The remainder of Greywall is populated by the cast off dregs of the world; the wanderers, the nomads, and the unwanted all make their homes in the Southern reaches of Greywall, nestled in among the arms of the Greywall Mountains. They are as far from civilization as they can get and here they stay, largely unmolested.

A mere one hundred years ago the Sss'ssk made themselves known to us in what is now called The Nesting Hills. They burst forth from the ground and, after some initial confusion and several unfortunate situations, began settling in. Their records are obscure to us and we have little knowledge of even their most recent past. That they have some affinity with the crystals they carry about their body and through these they are capable of communicating with others took several years to become evident, leading to much of the initial confusion and the lack of written works by which to learn of them. Even less is known of their companion species, the Hrr'kn. that they are in some way related seems evident, but beyond that slim piece of information lay words yet undiscovered. Are they some sort of Holy Man, scouts, Commanders, or do they fulfill an as yet unrecognised role in Sss'ssk society? Much study remains...

It used to be that Graywall, Dragonrend and the Dwome Expanse all shared common borders across much larger stretches of land. Then, one day, the Sss'ssk suddenly appeared in the middle of it all. Eventually, we discovered they had tunneled up from below ground somewhere and simply set up shop. For a while it looked like all four of us were going to go to war, blaming each other for the incursion. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed at Council Lakes and, after much negotiating and drawing lines on maps, a section of land was given equally from the three kingdoms affected to the Sss'ssk to use as their homelands. It has worked out pretty well so far. In exchange for the land you can often find Sss'ssk hard at work across Quinoth doing some of the more labor intensive tasks. Those Hrr'kn though? No one seems to know what they are doing. Even the Sss'ssk seem confused by them while at the same time in awe of them.

The Council Lakes area is, as has been mentioned, a place set aside by centuries of tradition as a common meeting area. All species are represented here and all are required to spend some resources in it's support, defense, and maintenance of its holdings. If conflict arises between two peoples, it is to the Council Lakes area that they go...

Council Lakes was set up so long ago that hardly anyone remembers exactly how or why it came into being. Representatives from each nation are housed in The Tower of Vepar where they debate such issues of the day as are brought before them. Each nation also has a small standing army within the boundaries of Council Lakes to aid in it's defense and to make sure no one tries to pull a fast one on anyone else while they are there. It is meant to be a peaceful refuge from the troubles of the world, a place where great minds can come together and work towards solving problems without interruption. sometimes that works. In practice, the Cyclopedians don't ever attend, sending a specially appointed Glimmer instead. The Sss'ssk send a Hrr'kn who supposedly speaks

for all of them. The Rakheune, the Lyverint, and the Dwome change their representatives frequently as new interests or factions gain the upperhand in their own lands (word is the Rakheune execute their previous representatives when a new one takes over and the less said about what the Lyverint do, the better). Sam's representative spends most of his time glaring at the Shedder across the table and the shedder himself often seems to be out of touch with the world's events. Fortunately, all this chaos is controlled and managed by an overseer and he has recently requested that new representatives be sent from each faction. Unfortunately, he's done this because something has gone wrong in the world and fresh minds not bogged down with ongoing petty council rivalries are needed.

...support staff, supplies and housing in in the nearby city of Jiriene, also known as the City Beneath the Arch. Here can be found citizens from across Quinoth, working and playing together in a true testament to what can be accomplished with careful thought and reasoning.

The City State of Minas Vari has neither representative on the council, nor say in anything but their own local politics. Yet they prosper and even thrive in what is arguably one of the most difficult locations. Surrounded entirely by water they live a seemingly charmed existence...

I don't know what to say about these guys. They're in a bad spot, but they've gone largely undisturbed over the years. Someday I really want to get out there and check them out. Imagine the manuscripts they must have.

The Isles of Dust are a sinister and foreboding place. No good thing comes from there and no good thing goes to it willingly. Ruin, waste, and devastation are all that is known there. Here, the Dragons did their worst work, and much of the land remains a scorched waste. From the Whispering Wastes in the West to the shores of the Silver Sea in the East, no sane man sets foot in the Isles of Dust though many have...

The Isles of Dust. Just the name makes you cringe with fear. All the stories ever told to an ill-behaved child about a boogey-man or goblins or the finger-snatchers come from something found in the Isles of Dust. The worst part isn't what's come out though, it's what has gone in. The last great war was fought there half a century ago against the things inside. We lost many people and, as often as not, they were used against us. Not as the living dead! Oh, no! The corrupted dead you can deal with, you know they aren't themselves any more, just animated husks with no real life in them. That's easy. But, what do you do when people like Himnusa, the Lyverint General, goes in at the head of an Army and just disappears, then, a month later, someone calling himself Himnusa the Deranged claims a stronghold on the very borders of what used to be the Dwome Expanse? How do you deal with that reality? Well, we did what we had to and some folks still live with the nightmare of what happened to their kith and kin that turned them to the dark. We won back then, but now, if you can believe the rumors and the stories out of the North, things are coming back. Yeah, I've had enough of this chapter.

CHAPTER 6

Transportation in and around the lands of Quinoth has always played an important role in the development of it's many people...

Unless you are some sort of hopeless rube from, I dunno, Dragonrend or The Nesting Hills, you already know all about the Air Whales and the routes they run from Booford Tower in the North to all the major lands. They're temperamental, skittish, and can't carry a lot for cargo, but they are good for getting folks from one place to another quicker than overland travel would be. They are, by and large, less dangerous, too. although, if you are on one when a storm hits, or they suddenly spook, there's nowhere to go but down.

If that doesn't suit you, you could always try one of the old teleport rings and hope the other end isn't blocked, broken, or otherwise detrimental to your health. Up to you, really.

CHAPTER 7

In conclusion...

Yeah, this is all fluff and putting on airs now. Blah blah blah, I'm a big fancy researcher reader. Blah blah, far superior to my peers... yakkity-yak-yak.... Wait...what's this?

And in closing, allow me a brief moment to address my assistant: Et mutantum mea verbum, maledictum vos!

Uh-oh. Time to go!